

FLEET FOCUS

USS Russell increases Engineering Quality Of Life

By GSCS (SW) Andrew Smith
USS RUSSELL

If it's quality of life you want as an Engineer, and "blue and gold" isn't for you, try the seven underway watchsection rotation currently in place in USS Russell (DDG 59).

Currently deployed to the Arabian Gulf, Russell looked at the "out of the box" innovations several ships are executing with great success, but decided to stay with an old tried and true method: train, train, train some more, and qualify.

The result is not only a huge increase in Engineering Department quality of life, but also a significant increase in personal qualifications, authority and responsibility.

It all began over several pots of coffee twelve months prior to deploying. During a casual conversation in the ship's Central Control Station (CCS) the ship's Chief Engineer, Lt. Don Wickens and the Senior Enlisted Advisor, Gas Turbine System Technician Senior Chief (SW) Andrew Smith jokingly thought up the idea of a long-range training strategy whose ultimate goal was to achieve a minimum of six underway watch sections.

A few pots of coffee later, they realized that it not only could be a reality, but also must be a reality.

Refusing to accept the notion that "it has never been done before" and "you two are certifiable!" they decided that it was possible. A training plan for the personnel was put into action.

The fruits of this plan have now resulted in Russell's engineering department being in seven, yes sev-

en, underway watch sections!

Three guiding principles formed the backbone of the plan. One was that very junior personnel would be given immense responsibility and this would require both faith and patience from the ship's leadership.

Another principle was that cross-training and elimination of "rice bowl" mentalities were absolutely essential. If a hull technician was

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the best candidate to qualify as Propulsion Plant Control Console Operator (PACC), he would get the training and drills necessary to qualify.

The final principle was the requirement for all assigned personnel to man a watch, from the recently reported Fireman to the Chief Engineer himself.

The first step was surprisingly simple. "Just getting everyone to believe that it was really possible

was the initial requirement," says Asheville, North Carolina resident Senior Chief Andrew Smith.

Engineering Department leading personnel devised long-range watchbills that incrementally increased the number of underway sections.

The next step was to plan and execute the necessary training and drills required making the watchbills reality. Working closely with the ship's Planning Board for Training, time was carved out of every day for intense training.

The result was that in two months the Engineers found themselves in four sections. Two months later, during Battle Group work-ups the watchbill expanded to five sections. On the eve of deployment the watch was in six sections.

One month into deployment, en route the Arabian Gulf, the Engineering Officer of the Watch qualifications of Ens. Jeffrey Arneson, Auxiliary Officer, and Electrician's Mate Chief (SW) Ronald Locklear, Leading EM, drove the Department to seven sections. The real key to the entire process was cross training.

On Russell it's not surprising to see Hull Technicians standing PACC and EOOW watches and Damage Controlmen standing Engineerroom Operator watches. The qualifications provide more flexibility and a greater appreciation for the work performed by other ratings.

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U.S. Navy photo

said Russell's Sailor Of the Year and newest Limited Duty Officer (LDO) Selectee, Hull Technician 1st class (SW) Ron Viggiani, of Orlando, Florida.

Russell is now experiencing the significant advantages of a seven section rotation.

On the personnel side, there are fewer personnel who need watch reliefs for evolutions such as flight quarters, more off-watch personnel available for casualty response and repair and added time for engineers to complete Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) qualifications and study for in-rate advancement exams.

When asked how it affected him, Little Rock, Arkansas native Engineman 3rd class (SW) Ray Johnson remarked "I didn't think that it would be possible to get seven sections underway. "The best

thing is that it gives you time to do what you need to do without interrupting the normal work schedule," said Johnson.

"I know I'll make second class on this exam," he added.

Materially the advantages are overwhelming. The ship has significantly reduced the number of casualties as each piece of equipment receives added attention from more highly qualified personnel.

Space cleanliness is at an all time high, and repairs are completed by well rested, cross-trained personnel. A little bit of dreaming and a great deal of planning has resulted in success beyond anyone's dreams.

Gas System Technician SE2 Jerry Crispin, originally from Missoula, Mont., summed it up by saying "This has been the most productive time at sea that I have ever seen or heard of."

Pacific Fleet Shore and Sea Sailors of the Year selected

By J01 F. H. Mowry
PACFLT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Pacific Fleet Sea and Shore Sailors of the Year for the new millennium, were recently selected during a ceremony held at Pearl Harbor Naval Station.

Petty Officer 1st Class Shawn W. LeRoy, a hospital corpsman qualified as a surface warfare specialist and as a member of the Fleet Marine Force was selected as the Pacific Fleet Shore Sailor of the Year.

"I'm humbled, honored and extremely proud to have been selected," said LeRoy, a Van Nuys, Calif. resident, who has been in the Navy since June 1983, and is assigned to Fleet Marine Force Pacific at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

"It's taken lots of study; learning proper etiquette, naval history and tradition," said LeRoy as he spoke of what it took for him to be selected for the competition.

He went on to explain how he set his goals

and made a commitment to himself, to become as knowledgeable as he could about current events and to live up to the Navy's core values of "Honor, Courage, Commitment."

"I'm proud to be the Shore Sailor of the Year and to have the chance to represent myself and my fellow Sailors throughout the Fleet," LeRoy said.

"I also want to thank my wife, Christine and my children, Cory and Nicole, for all their support. Christine has been my source of inspiration."

LeRoy will now move up to compete for the Chief of Naval Operations Shore Sailor of the Year later this month.

Petty Officer 1st Class Donald E. Farr, a signalman qualified as both a surface and air warfare specialist, was selected as the Sea Sailor of the Year for the Pacific Fleet, during a ceremony recently held at Pearl Harbor Naval Station.

"I am simply overwhelmed and honored," said Farr, a resident of St. Johns, Ariz., who

has been in the Navy for 13 years, and is currently assigned to Beachmaster Unit One with Commander, Naval Surface Force, Pacific.

Farr said his selection reflects the many hours of off duty time he has put in to helping with command and community projects.

He feels that the number one thing a Sailor can do to prepare for this type of competition and your career in the Navy is to learn your rating first.

In addition to this, Sailors should become warfare qualified and really apply themselves to self-improvement and off duty education.

"I am privileged to have won this honor," said Farr. "Everyone here has been great, these are some of the highest quality people I have ever met. Really good shipmates."

Farr credits his wife and family for their support as he worked his way up to selection as the Pacific Fleet Sea Sailor of the Year.

He will travel to Washington, D.C. in July, where he will receive a Navy Commendation

Medal and a meritorious advancement to the rank of Chief Petty Officer and have the opportunity to meet with The Chief of Naval Operations, Secretary of the Navy, and other dignitaries.

In addition Farr will receive an all expenses paid five-day vacation courtesy of the Fleet Reserve Association.

The runners up in the Shore Sailor competition included: Tawanna A. Gallassero, an aviation ordnanceman assigned to Naval Air Station Whidbey Island and Charles L. Stotz, an aviation warfare systems operator assigned to Fleet Aviation Specialized Operational Training Group, Pacific Detachment of Commander Naval Air Force Pacific.

For Sea Sailor: Petty Officer Patrick R. Driscoll, an operations specialist assigned to Commander Seventh Fleet, aboard USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19) and Timothy L. Watkins, an electronics technician aboard USNS Yukon (T-AO 202).

VP-47 provides drug education for youth



PH2(AW/NAC) Andrew Rutigliano photo

Aviation Warfare Systems Operator Airman Steven Dixon, of VP-47 chats with students from Pahoa High School, Hilo, about life in the Navy. Dixon and 21 other volunteer Sailors and Marines from VP-47 flew to Hilo to talk with the high school students about the Navy's view on drug awareness, physical fitness and teen sex. The visit also featured a demonstration by a K-9 unit. The group of Sailors and Marines wrapped up their day by tossing around a couple of footballs and joking with the students.

PACFLT Sailor's artwork is centerpiece of media event

By J01 F. H. Mowry
PACFLT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A U.S. Pacific Fleet Sailor recently had his artwork as the centerpiece of the naming ceremony here, for the Navy's newest submarine, USS Hawaii (SSN 776).

"I didn't expect the ceremony to be as large or publicized as it was," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Galen M. Kickingwoman. "So when I was presented with the task... I was happy to be a part of this historic event."

A 1988 graduate of Browning High School and a member of the Blackfeet tribe, Kickingwoman is an illustrator draftsman for the Navy, now working at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

"I was given an opportunity to help express the Navy's gratitude toward Hawaii while making a positive name for myself and Native Americans. I looked for an opportunity like this to hopefully be a motivator for some young people."



Kickingwoman enjoys the Navy because of the way it challenges him. In his present duties with the Commander, Submarine Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMSUBPAC) Public Affairs Office, he is the graphics editor for the Pacific submarine force magazine "Patrol" and creates graphics for COMSUBPAC's web site <www.csp.navy.mil>.

"There were many reasons [I joined the Navy]. I guess the most appealing reason for me was the opportunity to see the world," said Kickingwoman, an eight-year Navy

veteran. "And then you have the benefits that come along with the job that just can't be beat, like being stationed in Hawaii."

Following his assignment in Hawaii, Kickingwoman hopes for an assignment in Washington state.

"It would be closer to my hometown in Browning. It would also be convenient for my wife also, as her family lives in Northern California," he said.

The father of four added, "Plus with Seattle getting the new football stadium for the Seahawks, I could take my boys to most of the home games — I'm a big Seahawks fan."

"I hope I can give the younger kids in Browning some encouragement," Kickingwoman said.

"Maybe they will be inspired to plan for a job in the military whether it is graphics, navigating a submarine or flying an F-14."

"In the Navy it's just like the commercials say, 'Let the Journey begin.'"

Battle of the Coral Sea Commemoration in Darwin, Australia

By STG1 John Thrall
USS HOPPER

Sailors from USS Hopper (DDG 70), USS Jarrett (FFG 33), USS Fife (DD 991), along with the Royal Australian Navy, the Australian American Association of the Northern Territory, and numerous Australian dignitaries commemorated the fifty-eighth anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea May 2 at Bicentennial Park in the Esplanade in Darwin, Australia.

In a solemn ceremony, members of the two Allied Forces honored the sacrifices of the men and women who served Australia, New Zealand, and the United States during WWII. The Lord Mayor of Darwin, George Brown, relayed the importance of continuing the close ties between Australia and the United States that have spanned WWI, WWII, the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam War and the present conflict in East Timor.

Commander James Tobin, Commanding Officer HMAS Coonawarra and Cmdr. John Peterson, Hopper Commanding Officer, each spoke of the importance of the

Battle of the Coral Sea, remarking that although the battle was a tactical Japanese victory, it ended up being a strategic allied victory because it put a stop to Japanese plans of expansion into the South Pacific and ultimately saved Australia and New Zealand from invasion for the remainder of the war.

The President for the Australian-American Association, Mr. Sam Calder, expressed his country's gratitude for the bravery and sacrifice of the members of the U.S. Navy during the battle.

The ceremony continued with the Commanding Officers of the Hopper, Fife, Jarrett, and the Portuguese Naval ship Commandante Hermengilde Capelo laying wreaths at the cenotaph.

The service was concluded in prayer with a benediction and the sounding of the bugle with a final salute by all those gathered.

This ceremony marked the beginning of a five-day port visit in Darwin by Hopper, Fife, and Jarrett. The ships continue west as part of the Pacific Maritime Expeditionary Force (PACMEF) 00-2 deployment.